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## RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

RELIGION is still confused with theology, although the latter is only one aspect of the religious attitude and explanatory theory. Religion, psychologically speaking, is an attitude. Philosophically or sociologically, it is an explanation, or a justification, of something which the subscriber wishes greatly to have explained or justified. Its social function is that of the control of the world in which its devotees live, or of those parts of their environment with which they are most vitally concerned. These two aspects, the affective attitude and the philosophic explanation, are indispensable to all religious experience and belief and are found together in all religious doctrine and dogma, just as creed and the reverential attitude are always associated. If the thing to be explained is a mystery which has greatly puzzled men, or which they profess not to be able to comprehend by means of the reason, or which they cannot easily justify from current causal and moral philosophies, the explanation and justification appear all the more wonderful to the believers and are greatly prized. In such cases the attitudinal side is highly developed, the believer's emotions often rising to the pitch of adoration or awe. A religion which makes such a strong appeal as to become practically exclusively accepted within the region to which it has spread is likely to be based philosophically on a very great and absorbing mystery, on the one hand, and to make a tremendous appeal to the emotions in the

forms of reverence, gratitude, love and adoration, especially for the personal objects or factors involved in the explanatory theory, on the other. Thus, the great historic religions have usually been concerned with the explanation of the whence and whither of man, a solution of his destiny as cast along the simpler and more cosmic lines, while often neglecting the terrestrial and complicated immediate aspects of his destiny, regarding them merely as incident to the other more cosmical processes. The personalities conceived of as directing this destiny have been the objects of the strongest attitudes of love and hate, gratitude and fear, and other emotions, according as the dispensation of destiny was regarded as favorable or unfavorable to the recipient.

A theological religion is one in which personalities, especially gods and goddesses, play leading roles. The mystery or problem is there, as in all religion, but the explanation is closely tied up with the personalities of the beings who are supposed to dominate the cosmic or terrestrial situation. In fact, since man at first knew neither physics nor chemistry, biology nor psychology and sociology, but explained all phenomena in terms of personalities or personal causation, in the early stages of religion the gods themselves were the explanations. Primitive, and even barbarian and early civilized man did not often seek to go beyond personality into the organization of forces and factors behind these. In fact, he reversed the scientific method of explaining social phenomena, regarding the personality in the situation as the cause of other phenomena rather than as the product of them. Environment was constituted for him practically entirely of personality or quasi-personalities and not of the elaborate complexity of physical, biological and psycho-social factors and combinations of these, as we are now learning to conceive it. All early religions were therefore theologies or pre-theolo-

gies, in which causation and process were thought of as personal or by analogy of personality activity.

Only with the coming of a more objective method of analysis of natural and social forces has religion come to be divested increasingly of the theological and to take on the metaphysical and scientific aspects and forms. The scientist of today is inclined to explain the theological personalities as ideal objectifications of man's desires and sense of the right and proper organization and balance of things, always stated in terms of personal relationship and causation, because he knew no other formula. He clothed his divinities in the perfect forms of those attributes which he himself possessed in imperfect measure. What he should have desired to be, the gods were—omniscient, omnipotent, immortal, sometimes all-good, always all-cunning, omnipresent, with infinite powers of transmutability and of visibility and invisibility at will. They possessed his own emotions and form, or those of the animals he loved, feared, or respected, but always in greater perfection than he had them, or at least in more perfect adaptation to the purposes or ideas which they were supposed to serve. Thus the gods have been regarded as the anthropomorphic creations of idealistic and striving, self-conscious, and more or less socially conscious, man.

As man's analysis of his external world proceeded to the point at which he began to be able to formulate abstract statements of physical forces, to see climatic, geographical and biological factors at work, his tendency to state all phenomena in terms of superior personality manipulation, by analogy of his own immediate experiences, slackened. As the prototypes of physics and chemistry appeared and the concept of natural law developed theological personalities began to fade. A metaphysics began to take the place of theology in the minds of the learned, and this was in turn succeeded by a developing body of scientific

concepts. Causation became increasingly abstract and less and less personal. The gods were reduced, in the thinking of the philosophers, from the role of directors of the cosmical and human social processes to that of being the agents of natural law, which was now supreme.<sup>1</sup> Among the scientists of today there is some danger that theological personalities may become merely mythological, disappearing altogether from their thinking as active causal concepts.<sup>2</sup> The scientific and logical methods of abstraction have apparently triumphed in the world of the intellectuals, if not in the minds of the masses, and physics and chemistry and bio-physics and bio-chemistry and the mechanics of the physico-geographic and the psycho-social environments have become regnant as explanatory concepts instead.

But religion has not ceased to exist with the decline of the gods and the theologies which explain them. Although the popular tendency is to regard religion as exclusively theological and to disregard any non-theological definition of religion, the movement above described, away from personality over to abstract explanation, may be observed in all the traditional religions which have adherents in the western civilized nations. The tendency is particularly to be observed in the various forms of Christianity and Judaism. We have not lost our interest in the same old mysteries of life and mind and matter, the whence and the whither, the origin and the destiny of man; but we have learned to explain these mysteries and to justify the processes—evolutionary or otherwise—more and more in terms of scientific processes and concepts. Also we have become increasingly interested in the present aspects of man's destiny, with the result that religions have become less cosmical and more social at the same time that they

<sup>1</sup> The philosopher Grotius made the statement that God could not act contrary to natural law, but must act in conformity with it.

<sup>2</sup> See Leuba, J. H., *The Belief in God and Immortality*.

have become more scientific. The concept of heaven and the heavenly society becomes less definite and that of a better human society on this earth grows to take its place. Social ethics tends to grow at the expense of ritualistic observance based on a theological past. Some have even prophesied that the great historic religions, subjected to the transforming influence of modern scientific concepts, must either lose their theological character and become humanized and socialized, or perish, giving place to newer religions which embody the explanatory theories and the idealistic devotion to them which conform to our own age.

The evolution of the objects of worship shows very clearly the growth in religion from a theological to a scientific content. There seems to be good psychological argument for Professor Giddings' contention that the first object of worship in nature was not fetisch, spirit or god, but the "Great Dreadful." Early man, just emerging from the prehuman existence, or even throughout the stages of savagery, could not have defined personality in any very tangible terms. He felt it rather than described it. Other men must have seemed rather vague and indeterminate to him, as indeed did his own personality or self. We who are accustomed to rather sophisticated analyses of self, employing as aids to the process a considerable equipment of psychological terminology, comparatively easily distinguish ourselves from others on the sensory side, at least in adulthood. But even we confuse others with ourselves when we undertake to interpret them, constantly reading our own personality traits, attitudes and beliefs into them. Primitive man, possessing few verbal aids to discrimination, must, as the evidence indicates, have had infinitely more difficulty. The very young child suffers from the same limitations in technique, only gradually learning through many trials to distinguish person from person and others from himself. Both the child and the

primitive man fear the dark and those aspects of nature which they have not learned to account for in such terminology and through such processes of analysis as will remove the mystery from them. If the civilized child does not fear the "Great Dreadful," or nature, when he grows up, as does the primitive man, and as he himself fears the dark, it is because he has by that time acquired a method of accounting for things in analytical terminology which the primitive man did not possess, and also because his economic and technic position generally in the world has so greatly improved over that of the primitive man's that nature is to him more beneficent and less voracious and terrifying.

Such a vague characterization of external things, lumping them all more or less together and regarding them as fearful or harm-doing, is a sort of beginning of personality analysis. Closely allied to it is the singling out of certain objects, which are supposed to possess general or specific powers to produce certain results or ends. These objects, in a more sophisticated stage of development, are called fetishes. They are used as means to the control of some aspects of the environment. While such objects have not personality in the sense in which human beings possess it, their powers are evidently interpreted or imputed on the analogy of the observed or imputed powers of human beings. There is no other method of interpreting them known to the primitive man. Furthermore, they are supposed to possess not only powers, but also attitudes, which change from time to time and which can be modified by certain ascertained procedures, in much the same way as human attitudes are ascertained and modified. Such objects-with-power are not yet abstracted into the category of physical objects, that is, divested of personality. That comes with insight and completeness at a later stage. Also, such objects-with-power partake of the same vagueness

and instability from which all personality suffers in the stages before there is a technique for its analysis and a terminology for its description. But such a method of explaining magical or non-human control over the environment does represent a real advance in the definition of personality over the preceding method upon which it is superimposed and which it begins to supersede. It represents a distinct advance in definition and localization of causation and activity traits, even though these may be merely imputed and hypothetical ones. There is less vagueness and generality, more that can be definitely accounted for, in the causal and control process with such an explanation. We can imagine that the primitive man who had reduced his world control process from the "Great Dreadful" to fetishism must have felt more secure and comfortable than the one who had not done so, because he could "put his finger on things," as it were. And one of the functions of religion is to make the world a comfortable place for its inhabitants to live in.

The spirit, as an instrument of magical control over the environment, is but an extension of the principle of the object-with-power. It represents the beginning of the tendency to distinguish between physical or inanimate objects and the animate objects or objects with personality. The spirit tends to associate itself with some inanimate object which it uses as a dwelling place or refuge and which it controls. This concept of a distinction between a sheltering object and the sheltered spirit was undoubtedly helped out by the dream of experience of early man. He believed that his spirit had the power to leave his body, which remained quiescent in the place where it had gone to sleep, and go off about its business. It might go hunting, travel across the mountains, visit the departed dead in the spirit world, engage in warfare, or undertake many other activities. This observed dualism of his own nature might easily be



imputed to other objects also, on the accepted basis of regarding them by analogy with human or personality beings. The whole process of imputation is, of course, quite generally familiar. The spirit of the inanimate object seems to be much more freely dissociated from its "shelter" than that of the human being, possibly because the former is much less active. Also this object may be used as a shelter for many different spirits, although the spirits seem to prefer their regular and habitual dwelling places. Human bodies may also harbor alien spirits, although normally they serve as the homes of one particular spirit.

With this development of the spirit as the embodiment of the personality, the definition of personality is greatly extended in detail and completeness. With the multiplication of spirits, especially of types of spirits, the distinctions of personality become easier to perceive and enumerate. The spirit itself is, of course, at first but poorly developed in personality attributes. It is little more than the object-with-power, the power having become detachable as spirit. But the spirits grow in richness of content as the number of things they can do multiplies. From the spirits in their well-developed stages we make the transition to the gods. A god is a spirit embodied in human or animal form, although not necessarily in flesh and blood. The god usually possesses the power of making itself invisible when it desires, of transmutation into other forms than its habitual one, and of very rapid, if not instantaneous, movement. It also, of course, possesses the power of magic, or of acting by fiat, in a very high degree. The god is the almost perfect embodiment of magical power. Gods, like spirits, are domiciled, at least in the earlier stages of their development. They have their favorite dwelling places and places of dalliance, and in these places they may be found ordinarily. But their range of movement is very great. The god is a much more complete person-

ality than the spirit. By the time the god has developed out of the spirit, human personality analysis and characterization have also developed greatly. They have approached in definiteness and richness somewhat to the condition we have today, although there is, of course, no definite psychological technique for that analysis of which we are capable. This high degree of human personality analysis, carried over by imputation to the spirits, made it possible for a rich galaxy of gods to develop in the image of man.

This is the stage of polytheism in the worship of religious objects, and strictly speaking it is the first full-fledged stage of theology. But in reality there is no essential difference between the stages of religious development in which the gods play a part and those earlier ones in which spirits and objects-with-power are the agencies of magical control, except the differences in degree of personality development. The essential distinguishing characteristic of the theological stage of worship is personality, and there is a degree of personality in all of these types of objects from the "Great Dreadful" to the gods themselves. Only in the later stages of religious development does personality begin to give way before the abstract natural forces which tend to resolve themselves into physics, chemistry and bio-physics and bio-chemistry and the various permutations and functional organizations of these.

The gods of the polytheistic stage are enriched personalizations of the spirits, their content growing with the growth of personality in general. But they are, of course, always personifications, and in the main of two types of objects, the natural physical forces and attributes and of the human emotions and traits. Thus, in the Greek theology, Jupiter is the thunderer, the god of lightening, of rain, of the majesty of the heavens. Vulcan is the personification of the volcano and the underground fires, a black-

smith at his forge, and a worker in metals. Neptune is the god of the sea, of the rolling, galloping waves; Ceres of productiveness; Apollo of the sun in the heavens, the torch bearer of the day. The passions are equally well represented. Venus is goddess of the tender passion, of love and voluptuousness and of beauty, as soft and white as the foam of the sea from which she sprang. Mars, whom even the ancients made the companion of sexual love, is the thundering god of war, cruel, fierce, powerful, delighting in the torch, more effective in the fight than powerful in intellect. The muses, the fates, and numerous other divinities, stand out as the representatives and patrons of the arts, or of some common or crucial experience in life. Early peoples, not having abstract symbols, with which to express their interpretations of human nature and social processes or even of physical nature and processes, symbolized them concretely in personifications, finding as far as possible, analogies in human action and human personality with which to express their ideas and attitudes.

Of course, we must not expect to find the polytheistic pantheons made up of merely simple personalities representing simple traits when we discover them formed at the threshold of history. Nor should we think of each god or goddess as always having his or her own well-marked-off sphere. There are, as a matter of fact, all sorts of syntheses and overlappings, conflicting jurisdictions and multiple and divided personalities, so to speak, among the gods. Diana is at least a two-in-one goddess, representing both the chase and chastity, and also closely allied to that subtle and dangerous goddess, Luna. Minerva is not only the goddess of wisdom, but she is the titular defender of the Acropolis, where she stands Mars-like with sword in hand and her shield upon her arm. Mars is both fighter and master-of-lust. Jupiter seems to have absorbed half

a dozen personalities, more or less. This multiplication of personality within the same divinity probably arose in the main from syntheses and absorptions of different gods into one. Thus, a group of divinities inhabiting the same region or representing different attributes of the same general aspect of nature or human character were apparently consolidated into one powerful deity. This latter procedure was apparently the one which gave rise to the composite character of Jupiter. Perhaps the procedure of synthesis explains the two diverse characteristics of Minerva. In other cases still, gods were imported and assimilated to those they most resembled in the adopted or adopting country. In this way a divinity, at first fairly simple, might become quite complex and even contradictory in his personality. Another source still of this complexity of character of the gods was undoubtedly a natural growth due to the gradual expansion and multiplication of personality traits in the worshippers and the accumulation of legends about the persons of the gods, building into them the traits and values which the stories attributed to them. If the gods were social fictions, equally truly may it be said that they were in large part the product of the habit of men in their leisure moments of indulging in fiction as a method of amusing themselves.

This tendency toward the synthetic fusion or synthesis of the gods proceeds until monotheism is approached, in which, theoretically at least, the valuable elements of personality and attributes of power of all the gods are merged in one supreme and all-powerful and all-wise divinity. No people as a whole ever accomplished this fusion entirely, although it is possible that some sects within a people have attained to the complete concept of monotheism and the worship of a single god. What usually results is the emergence of a powerful and dominating synthetic personality in a class by himself, with a number of subsidiary

tiers in the divine hierarchy, such as the devil (who, indeed, sometimes appears successfully to defy God), the archangels and angels, good and evil spirits, saints, etc. The highest ideal conceptions of the most approved personality values are attributed to this supreme god, in addition to perfection of magical or fiat powers, omniscience, omnipresence, power of invisibility, of annihilating space and time, transmutability, and all the other attributes which belong to the conceptions of magic rather than of science—truly what each individual would like to possess for himself.

One of the greatest aids to the development of monotheism is undoubtedly the achievement of social unity among a people. As they progress from the tribal to the national stage of economic and social development, as their cultures become merged and amalgamated, when they can think largely with a single mind, the diversity and multiplicity of gods tend to disappear and the concept of divinity acquires a unity which is comparable to that of the national mind. The monotheistic conception of divinity having once been established with a fair degree of perfection, it in turn serves as a focus for the drawing together of divergent strands of thought and ideals in the nation. Especially, if the concept of the monotheistic divinity is a dogmatic and coercive one, it is likely to attach itself to all forms of psychic expression and to draw them into close conformity, thus in the end developing a highly self-conscious and characteristic culture. Such was that of the ancient Jews, and such is that of all countries which have a dogmatic national religion, whether it be theological or non-theological. The dominant German religion in the last forty or fifty years was only incidentally theological, but was primarily that of national aggrandizement—a politico-socio-economic religion—and it exhibited as many signs of intolerance and coercion in behalf of its

“Kultur” as did the theological or monotheistic religion of the Jews and other peoples in like stages of development.

Pantheism is essentially depersonalized monotheism. All the ideal attributes of the personal god remains, such as omnipresence, omnipotence, and the rest, but they are reduced to essence instead of being super-human qualities. The god has now passed out of the human or anthropomorphic stage and has become a divinity of principle. Pantheism represents the coming of the metaphysical stage of religion, and since it grows out of the theological stage it carries over some of the theological attributes into the metaphysical stage. Pantheism appeared first among the philosophers, those who had begun to speculate about the nature of matter and force and motion and the qualities of objects and had learned to trace them back of the personality concept. It came when the analysis of physical nature reached the point where fiat and will gave way to principle or the concept of uniformity in causation. This concept of uniformity is the basis of metaphysics and a metaphysical interpretation of the world is the basis of pantheism. This is also the basis of the scientific method, but the metaphysical interpretation falls short of the scientific, because it lodges the cause of phenomena in certain essence qualities in the objects themselves. It subjects motion and force to a sort of mechanical analysis, but leaves the mystery of the theological personality in the thing, although it is transformed in nature within the object and uniformized as among objects. Thus, uniformity and inevitability are substituted for the fiat will and whimsical unaccountability in the physical world. This substitution was inevitable, once the phenomena of the physical world had been sufficiently analyzed to establish the regularity of their occurrence. Metaphysics banishes spirits and gods or merely makes them ornamental or, at most, a great *deus ex machina*, which sets the thing in

motion and then does not interfere with it again. As Grotius said, God cannot act contrary to natural law. So pantheism neglects God and substitutes Natural Law, which now becomes a depersonalized entity or cause, with all the attributes of divinity except personality, and which pervades the universe as an essence inhering in all space and matter. Modern vitalism is a belated form of this metaphysical concession to the theological persistence in the thinking of man about the events surrounding him.

Pantheism began as the religion of the philosophers who had proceeded beyond the theologico-personality concepts of causation in their analysis of physical nature and the universe. For a very long period of time it did not get into the popular thinking at all, for the masses of the people did not advance beyond theological and personality concepts in their causal thinking, at least with respect to the more ultimate phenomena of the world and universe. However, it may be noted that they began to think in quasi-mechanistic terminology regarding purely local and immediate phenomena before they did of the more distant and less easily observable phenomena. But with the spread of physical analysis and of mechanistic concepts, which has become rather marked in recent times, the masses of the people have absorbed enough of this method of thinking to arrive at a sort of metaphysics of matter and of life and to depersonalize their concept of God. The growth of astronomy, as well as of the other physical sciences, has contributed largely to this. The constant searching of space and the breaking up of matter into its elements has left no place for God as person, in any nearby part of the universe, at least. But there may still be room for God, with His old immediacy and other attributes, as essence, pervading all space and matter. The average man does not think out his change of view with so much logical clarity as this statement would seem to imply, but this is about

the sort of conclusions he arrives at, working more or less subconsciously and incoherently.<sup>8</sup>

If the pantheism of the theists never did become the universal belief of the masses, much less has the a-theism of the scientific interpretationists in religion. This method of answering the question as to the nature and meaning of the universe was developed primarily in the nineteenth century after the rise of modern physical science. For the mysterious essences in nature and matter were substituted, through a process of scientific analysis and synthesis, categories of mass, motion and energy. These were expressed in definite quantitative mathematical, instead of vague mystical, terms. As a result of this substitution the laws and principles of science were made to replace the old concept of natural law, and science grew at the expense of metaphysics. Since the type of religion always follows and conforms to the method of interpreting phenomena, there now succeeded, in the thinking of the scientific philosophers, to the old pantheism which had grown out of a metaphysical interpretation of phenomena, a scientific interpretation of the universe and of life, couched in terms of scientific law and principle and formulae.

This new scientific interpretation of the universe was given by the theological and metaphysical interpretationists in religion the term "atheism," sometimes varied into "agnostic" and "infidel," to suit the mood or bias of the apologist or critic. Indeed, it was atheistic, since, as LaPlace said to Napoleon concerning his *Celestial Mechanics*, its treatment had no need of the hypothesis of God or the gods. Personality and personal causation in cosmic matters, and in the larger and more abiding aspects of

<sup>8</sup> In testing out my elementary students, mainly freshmen and sophomores, as to their concept of God, I was surprised to find that the majority of them did not think of an anthropomorphic god, at least with regard to form, at all, but had the concept of an all-pervading essence. This is indeed a great change in the popular attitude since the time when the Dorè engravings represented God as a robust, benign patriarch of fifty or sixty in human form.



terrestrial affairs, drop out and mathematical statements of the correlations of matter, motion and energy take their place. The sphere of personality causation is narrowed down to human and social phenomena; and there begin to be those who predict that a further analysis of phenomena and the development of scientific method will remove even these spheres from a pure personality interpretation.<sup>4</sup> Herbert Spencer was one of the first to grasp fully and set forth systematically this new viewpoint of interpretation. Following the publication of his *First Principles* in 1862 many contributions were made in this same field of philosophic interpretation and the controversy between this viewpoint and that of the theologians and the metaphysicians waxed warm for more than half a century. Comte and the Positivists had approached this viewpoint in a more metaphysical and somewhat sentimental religious scheme even before Spencer's essay appeared, and the idea had been gaining volume and clarity since the time of the French enlightenment of the eighteenth century.

The function of religion, whether theological, metaphysical or scientific in its method of interpretation, has always been to control the environment directly or to provide a theory of environmental control. The great historical religions, which have absorbed the effective attention of the masses of mankind during historic times, have endeavored to expand this theory of control and adjustment to cover the whole of space and time and to look upon man and his social organization as the product, although chief terrestrial objective, of this cosmic process. The chief questions asked and for which answers were sought in the nature of the cosmic religious order was the whence and whither of man and his duties relative thereto and to the author or authors of this destiny while

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of this subject, see Ellwood, "*Objectivism in Sociology*," *American Journal of Sociology*, XXII, 289-307; and Bernard, "*The Objective Viewpoint in Sociology*," *Ibid*, XXV, 298-325.

he sojourned on the earth. The different great religions made different answers to these questions, but none was uninterested in them. Before the great historic religions developed, the problems of control were more immediate and local and man's religious interpretations less philosophical. This is the period in which control by what is called magic was dominant, but the method of magic continues still to be, at least in the larger affairs of man—those which seem to be out of his immediate reach and purview—the professed method of control, even in the professedly theological stages of religious development, that is, in the polytheistic and the monotheistic stages, and to a large degree in the pantheistic stage. Magic disappears, or tends to disappear, as the method of control, only as man's analysis and abstraction of the physical forces and processes of nature give him a capacity for refined and progressive adjustment to his environment, which he lacked in the stages of the dominance of magic.

When the system of religious control reaches the stage of development at which it becomes a theory of control instead of merely a technique of control, it serves as a source from which the individual may draw the materials for a philosophy of life for his guidance, although the average individual is likely to be guided in his conduct more by his subconscious valuations and impressions than by his consciously arrived-at determinations. A system of social ethics, at first mainly ritualistic and later more or less rational, grows up within this general system of religious philosophy to take care of the every-day human contacts. As the scientific aspect of religion develops at the expense of the theological or magical, the philosophic explanatory system develops into a correlation of the sciences, and the social ethics is attached more firmly to the sciences contributing to this philosophic system and is transformed into a sort of social philosophy. Also as the

content or objects of attention in religion are transformed from personalities or divinities into scientific principles or formulae and systems, the strong emotional attitude connected with the former is likely to be weakened before the progressive intellectualization of the latter. Dogmatism, so often the accompaniment of theologies, is much mitigated in the scientific religions; change of idea and content is accomplished much more easily, with the result that explanations of environment are brought and kept much more nearly up-to-date.

So noticeable is all this that many people would not speak of religion after the metaphysical stage is reached, at least as a general system of explanatory philosophy, but would prefer to give it simply the name of philosophy or science. To them there does not appear to be enough of the affective element to justify the term religion. But there is always a strong affective attitude towards the content of any general philosophic or scientific explanatory system which is used to orient one's thinking, or action, toward the major problems of life. People are not lacking in devotion to that general synthesis which they often call just "science" and which they use for such guidance. "Science" has its perfervid partisans as well as "religion," or, better, as theological religion or some metaphysical cult. If there is not as strong dogmatism about science it is primarily because the objects of affective attention are abstractions instead of concrete idealized personalities and they are arrived at by intellectual analysis instead of emotional synthesis.

Ex-president Eliot was quoted some years ago as stating that the religion of the future would be the outgrowth of and moralization of modern science. Many people have already developed science into a religion in this way. The age-old question of "whence" is answered for them in the facts of geology and biology, including the data and prin-

ciples of embryology, heredity, etc. They resolve the problem of "whither" by appealing to the facts of chemistry and the related sciences. Their problems of present adjustment to and control of their terrestrial and social life are cared for through the various mental and social sciences. They work up for themselves a synthetic collection of the principles and data in these various sciences which best meet their needs of explanation and adaptation and control and constitute them a more or less absolute category of truth, for which various degrees of reverence are felt and expressed. Some of the ethical culture societies professedly base their principles and teachings upon such an organization of scientific principles. Beyond a few such sporadic manifestations, the "religion of science" has not established a "church," unless the institutions for research and the dissemination of scientific knowledge could be called such. These means for the popularization of scientific truth, especially in its relation to human life and society—and all religion centers around human and social uses, at least in its affective content—will become increasingly common.

When we turn to the secondary religions, those that group themselves around some particular problem of adjustment or control, rather than the great systems of explanatory religious philosophy, we find these same principles and tendencies exemplified. The old belief that human welfare can be fostered by magic is mainly disappearing and the idea that God interferes in the process of events to promote the individual's success here or to prevent disaster elsewhere is also no longer generally held, at least by the better educated people. It may be said, therefore, that the theological interpretation of the secondary human adjustments, the theories of social and community welfare and of individual perfectability, are no longer dominantly theological. They are usually meta-

physical or scientific. As examples of the metaphysical secondary religions may be cited the various "New Thought" theories of individual psychic adjustment and Christian Science, both of which have attained much vogue and even threaten the dominance of the old theological religions. The problem or "mystery" in both these cases is how the individual can achieve an efficient functional adjustment to life. The solution to which the adherents are devoted, which constitutes the body of their religious belief or doctrine, is found in the principles of auto-suggestion and the teachings of Christian Science. The solution is primarily subjective, these religions not being social religions as such are ordinarily understood. They substitute for the old theological subjective adjustment made through prayer a new one of auto-suggestion and a modified form of psycho-therapy. Their explanations and theories are mainly metaphysical, but they utilize much scientific data and technique.

Other secondary religions which have come more fully under the control of scientific method, and which at the same time show a trend more largely from the subjective and individualistic motivation over to the social, are such social programs and cults as woman's suffrage, the conservation of natural resources for the future improvement of civilization, single tax, socialism, anarchism, classicism, cubism, and the like. In each case there is a problem of adjustment or control which seems a vital, perhaps the most vital, problem to those who are attempting to solve it. The proposed solution which they accept constitutes a religious doctrine, although it may be also a more or less approved or exploded theory in social science. Thus, the belief in monarchy or in socialism, to take examples at random, as the proper methods of organizing and controlling human society for certain expressed ends becomes a religion in the minds of its convinced and enthusiastic

supporters. If one cares to look for analogies to the great historic religions they are not lacking. In the case of socialism the problem which presents itself to its enthusiasts is the establishment on earth of a social order which will bring justice and happiness to every one. The body of doctrines or beliefs consists of the economico-social theories of state ownership of the general and large scale service utilities, regulated distribution, surplus value, etc. The ultimate goal, which may perhaps be compared to the Christian heaven, is the "Co-operative Commonwealth," which formerly was a true religious slogan among the socialists. The socialist bible, among the orthodox, is or was until recently Karl Marx' *Das Kapital*. Spargo tells of a poor working man who every Sunday walked seven miles, each way, across the city to spend the day with a friend, religiously spelling out the words and sentences of this work, most of which he did not understand.<sup>5</sup> At one time the socialist societies undertook to edit and introduce an extensive Sunday School literature based on socialist works, and communist groups have been accustomed to meet regularly Sunday mornings to read and expound the writings of Lenine and his associates.

What is true of socialism is in greater or less degree true of all the modern issues and programs. They take on a religious significance. Social work becomes to many a true religion to which devout workers consecrate their lives. The Salvation Army is an example of a mixture of the humanitarian motive of salvaging human derelicts and traditional Christian dogma. Here a new secondary social religion is fused with a great historical theological religion. But in the social work of the associated charities and the various welfare and protective leagues the theological element is almost wholly replaced by the principles and technique of social science. No theological doctrines are taught

<sup>5</sup> See Spargo, *The Marx He Knew*, for a good example of the religious attitude in Socialism.

by the secular societies of this type and none is insisted upon in the recipient of relief or protection or guidance. The object is social and individual improvement through a better adjustment of the individual to the social organism. Thus the principles of the social sciences, and of all science in fact, become the theoretical or explanatory content of the new scientific secondary religions, just as they tend to be for the newly evolving great explanatory philosophic system which many men are building up to supplement or replace the historic systems of religious explanatory philosophy.

The affective element may be much stronger in the secondary religions than in the great primary explanatory religious systems, especially when based on modern science. Relationships and concepts are likely to be less abstract in the secondary religions. Control of environment tends to be more directly control of human personality. The human ends, the results for concrete living, for enjoyment and suffering, are likely to be much more easily visible. Thus the enthusiastic advocates of universal suffrage, of eugenics, of Bolshevism, of Americanization, are likely to speak with a zeal and passion to which the more or less academic advocate of the religion of science as the ultimate solution of all human problems is largely foreign. Dogmatism is inseparable from the minor religions, even when they are based on scientific rather than metaphysical and theological interpretations. It is perhaps most marked in the secondary religions based on theological interpretation. Most of the slaughterings and persecutions recorded in the history of Europe as being connected with the exercise of the Christian religion were not the product of contests over abstract theological dogmas or theories in themselves, but took place with reference to the application of these to very concrete problems of social adjustment, such as political and economic rights, theories

of government, or class distinctions. The bloody conflicts came usually over matters within the purview of secondary religions, seeking for a justification in the general theory of Christianity. And so it is today, except that the secondary religions now appeal more largely to scientific data and principles for their justification.

Even a great historical religion may undergo such a change as has been outlined here. The recent growth of Christianity has been from the theological and metaphysical toward the scientific explanatory system in content. It should not be forgotten that Christianity developed out of the old Hebraic religion largely as a social protest movement, or as an application of fundamental religious philosophy to some of the minor religious values of the time, such as the superiority of human functional values to formalism and ritual, the plea for economic and social justice, a struggle against an office-holding hierarchy, for an ethical as against a traditional religion, etc. The founder of the new religion lost his life in pursuing these ends. Thus Christianity was never merely theological dogma in point of content, as indeed no great religion has ever been, but more than most of the great historic religions it justified human and social values by its appeals to theological sanctions, and sometimes approached very closely to an appeal to purely human values or sanctions.

During the late Roman times and in the Middle Ages Christianity absorbed much metaphysical material and had its character largely transformed by it. The first large influx of the metaphysical, at least on the social side, was probably from contact with Stoicism and the Roman legal philosophy. But the greatest accessions of this sort were from the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, the decrees of the various church councils and the writings and teachings of the church fathers. St. Augustine did a great deal to infuse neo-Platonism into the fabric of Christianity



on its philosophic side, thus laying a metaphysical basis for religious guidance of conduct for those who could assimilate the more abstract ideals. Throughout the Middle Ages the teachings of Aristotle often rivaled the Bible in influencing the writings and teachings of the great church philosophers, such as Saint Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus. Especially on the ethical and political sides of Christianity did Aristotle's philosophic principles and his quasi-social science have great influence. The impress of the metaphysical philosophy is also pronounced in the decrees of the church councils. Many of the more general questions settled there, as well as those disputed by the schoolmen, were primarily metaphysical in character. There were more disputes and decrees regarding essences, the nature of substances and the qualities of virtues and vices, the concepts of soul and sin, the spiritual jurisdiction of church and priest, and such matters, than there were about the nature and conduct and commandments of the gods. The mediaeval Roman Catholic church and its doctrine had become primarily metaphysical and only secondarily theological. The same fact is to be noted in connection with the Protestant Church and its discussions and decrees. Luther, Melancthon, Henry VIII, Calvin, the English theologians, the council which produced the famous thirty-nine articles, are concerned primarily with metaphysical concepts. God and the heavenly hosts are enveloped with a shroud of metaphysical verbiage and come into the clear light of day no more, except through the words of the popular preachers and the people themselves. The reason for this marked transformation of Christianity from a theological to a metaphysical religion was to be found in the fact that the prevailing methods of thinking had now become metaphysical, the theological concepts having gone into the background.

The present tendency in Christianity, at least among the leaders, is to bring it on over from the metaphysical stage to that of the dominance of the social sciences. Neither the metaphysical nor the theological elements of Christianity have disappeared from it, but probably remain more important than the scientific. This is especially true, if we consult the formal side of the religion. The official doctrines and confessions of faith, the traditional dogmas, the treatises on systematic Christian theology, are made up primarily of metaphysical and theological discussions and statements. But these elements play a constantly diminishing role in the newer Christianity. Its most vital lines of growth are in the direction of a social religious theory and a practical social service, both of which are based on the social sciences. This assertion is well attested by the fact that all the leading denominations of the Christian Church, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the Federated Council of the Churches of Christ, a body acting for the leading Protestant denominations have all made advanced declarations on the leading social questions of the day. These declarations embody the foremost pertinent principles of the social sciences as their primary substance and recognize the metaphysical and the theological traditions of the churches only incidentally or by way of courtesy. To be sure, these declarations have not the dignity of formal creeds, but they have much more weight with the intelligent membership than have the traditional creeds.

Also the denominations of the Christian Church have launched out on numerous social service enterprises of a great variety of types, ranging from simple programs of relief, through constructive programs of education and

social reform, to scientific investigations of social conditions as a basis for their other types of social service. These various undertakings, such as the rural survey work of the Presbyterian Church, the constructive information service of the Methodist Church, the investigational work of the Interchurch World Movement in connection with the steel industry and their program for a general national survey of social and religious conditions, are familiar to all students of social affairs. In fact, it is asserted both by friends and opponents of the tendency that the Christian Church of today is moving in the direction of becoming a great social service and instructional agency, abandoning for the most part its theological and metaphysical predilections, or at least relegating them to the category of the aesthetic and ritualistic. Certainly, through its embodiment of the principles of the social and other sciences, the church is coming under the domination of the scientific method and content. Not only does it no longer explain disease as the effect of evil spirits or earthquakes (after John Wesley) as the act of God punishing the wicked, but it expresses its religious values primarily in terms of the findings of the social sciences. The principles of sociology, psychology, economics and political science come to be embodied in the fabric of Christianity as it changes its character.

Some hold that this transformation marks the decay of religion before the growth of science. Such a view suffers from the fallacy that religion is synonymous with theology. There is no likelihood that religion will disappear, for it is the fundamental valuation process which man makes of his world and of his adjustments to it expressing the terminology and technique of thinking of the

time. In fact, many of the leading churchmen of the day firmly believe that the only way in which the great historic religions, including Christianity, can survive is to have their content and method transformed from the old theological and metaphysical concepts to the new scientific ones in which men now think. If such a transformation should not occur the historic religions might be lost, but not religion itself. In its new form it would take shelter with the various humanitarian movements and in social ethics. The traditional religions would remain, if at all, as aesthetic and cultural survivals.

The transformation of Christianity also illustrates one other tendency in religious evolution, that of the great historic religious philosophic explanatory systems to embody the approved secondary religions within their general content. At all times the newly arising secondary adjustment problems—the great problems of human origin and destiny being the primary problems—have been taken over with their accepted solutions into the implicational content, if not into the actual theory and doctrine, of the great religion of the age. Thus Christianity has always adopted or fostered certain social institutions and theories. It has, for example, made itself the champion of the monogamic family, of the state, of private property, and at times of slavery, from the time of the early church fathers to the present. Those secondary religions which are not generally accepted by the people are also rejected by the dominant historic religion, which is conservative. With the development of a more definitely scientific phase of religious content, perhaps we may expect to find all of the social programs sanctioned by the social sciences

approved by the dominant major religion, whether it be Christianity or some new synthetic religion based on science alone and neglecting Christian tradition.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> It is interesting to note that this championship of minor social religions by a dominant religion may cause apparently sound social practices or theories to be repudiated by analogy or through sympathy when a protecting religion comes into disfavor. Thus the recent dislike for Christianity on the part of certain types of radicals has often been extended to include a condemnation of monogamy and much of the accepted fabric of ethics, not because social science condemned them, but because Christianity championed them and was closely identified with them.